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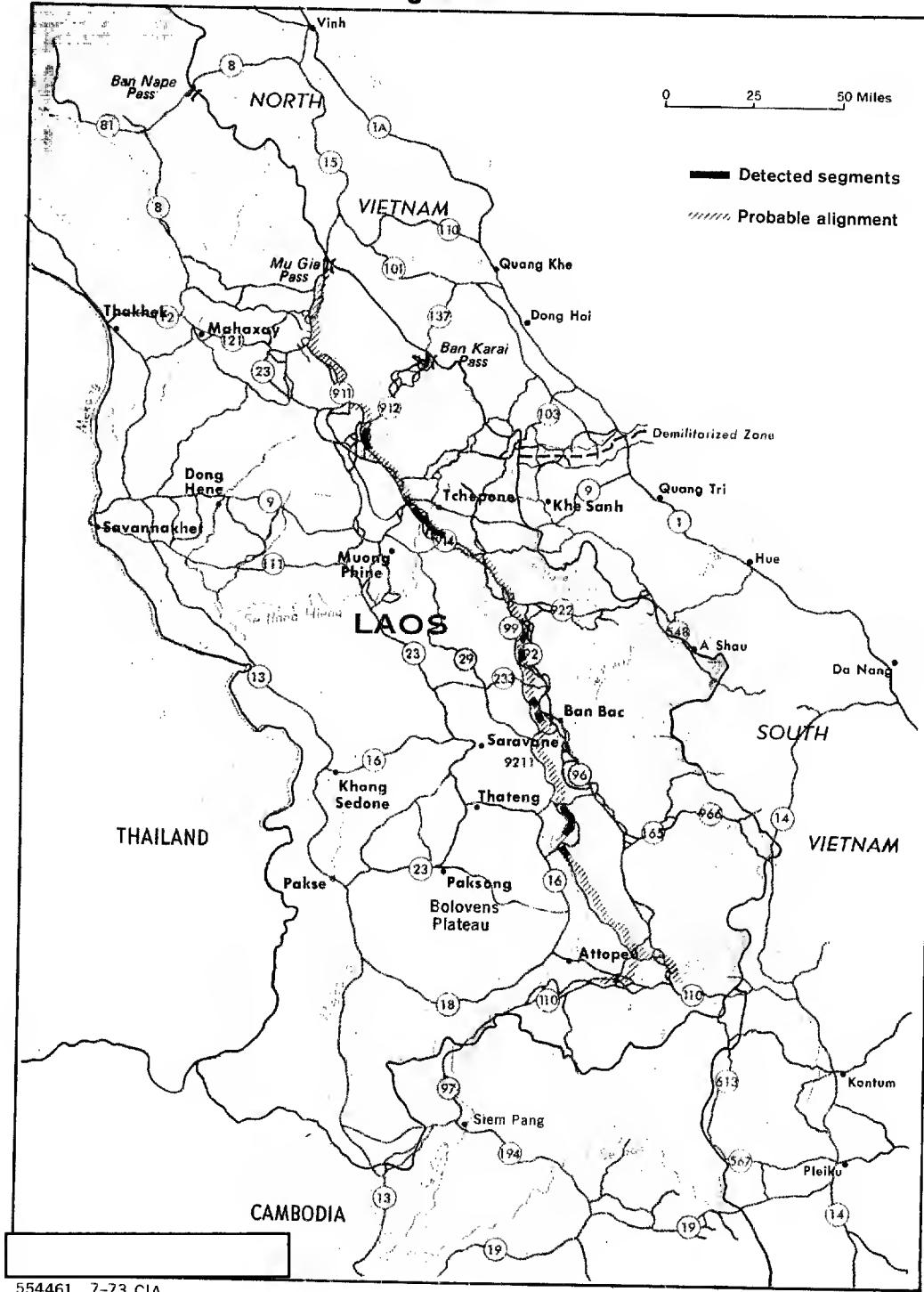
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CAMBODIA: The Communists are holding firmly to their tough position on a Cambodian settlement.

Sihanouk's statement yesterday that he would not talk with Washington undoubtedly represents a certain degree of posturing. His remarks suggest, however, that he is in no mood to consider proposals for compromise terms. Moreover, Peking, Hanoi, and the Khmer insurgents all agree that Sihanouk must play a central role in a settlement. His stance indicates that he and the Communists have been emboldened by the announcement of the 15 August US combat ban and plan to stand on their present demands in the belief that the US must eventually accede to them as the price for a truce.

Both Peking and Hanoi have recently reaffirmed their support for Sihanouk's terms which include an end to US military involvement, removal of the Lon Nol government, and acceptance of a Sihanouk-led government.

North Vietnamese Building New Road



NORTH VIETNAM - LAOS: The North Vietnamese appear to be building a major new road along the length of the Lao panhandle. Aerial photography during the past two months has revealed road crews and bulldozers working on 52 miles of new roadbed along widely scattered segments of the existing central supply corridor route.

The location of these segments and the similarity of design suggest that they eventually will be joined in one 300-mile highway from the Ban Karai and Mu Gia passes in the north to the southern Lao border. At the present pace, the work could be completed by next spring or even earlier.

The new road will be far superior to those previously constructed by the North Vietnamese in the Lao panhandle. North Vietnamese-built roads in Laos have been single lane and have not had extensive protection from the effects of monsoon rains. The new segments, however, are wide enough for two lanes. Drainage ditches have been dug on either side of the road and culverts are being built in some areas.

The construction of the highway is clear evidence of the continuing importance of the Laotian infiltration corridor to Hanoi. The new road would increase the North Vietnamese capability to move supplies through Laos in all seasons and presumably would supplement a road of similar design and capacity that is being constructed southward from the North Vietnamese border through Communist-controlled territory in South Vietnam. [redacted]

EGYPT-LIBYA: President Qadhafi's two-week sojourn in Egypt may have deepened Cairo's conviction that the proposed union should be little more than a symbolic federation.

President Sadat had originally hoped to use Qadhafi's visit as an occasion to acquaint the Libyan leader with the realities of Egyptian politics and the necessity for taking a gradual approach toward unification. The result, however, has been a public exchange of criticism and thinly veiled insults. Egyptian officials and journalists have bluntly expressed their misgivings about Libya's cultural revolution and the dangers of immediate and complete unity. Qadhafi has openly revealed his irritation with the Egyptians' attitudes and Cairo's footdragging on merger preparations.

Sadat registered his concern about Qadhafi's uncompromising position during a visit to Tripoli in mid-June. This first-hand exposure to Qadhafi's cultural revolution, as well as Qadhafi's current antagonistic attitude, may have convinced Sadat that real integration of the two countries at this point would be impossible.

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South Asia: India has invited Pakistani officials to New Delhi for bilateral talks on 16 July. The Pakistanis had earlier proposed 9 July in Karachi, but the Indians prefer their capital where Bangladesh representatives are available for consultation. President Bhutto and his top advisers will be on their way to Washington by 16 July, so further postponement of the talks to late July or early August appears likely.

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West Germany - Hungary - Bulgaria: Bonn announced yesterday that Hungarian and West German representatives will "soon" begin negotiating the establishment of diplomatic relations and that Foreign Minister Scheel will pay an official visit to Bulgaria. West Germany has no serious problems with either Hungary or Bulgaria and the establishment of diplomatic relations with both countries should proceed quickly.

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*These items were prepared by CIA without consultation with the Departments of State and Defense.

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~~NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE~~

The United States Intelligence Board on 5 July
approved the following national intelligence esti-
mate:

NIE 15-73

Yugoslavia After Tito

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